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none such were to be had, they did not scruple to seize on whoever fell first into their hands. Strabo asserts, that captives generally fell by the hands of the Druidesses, who, dragging them one by one to the side of a large cistern, beside which stood the officiating Druidess with a long knife, which she plunged into the breast of each, their blood was received into this cistern, from which their most important predictions were formed concerning the fate of the war, which, being communicated to the whole army, were readily received and acted upon.

From the foregoing descriptions, it will be easily perceived that Druidism consisted more in outward ceremony than any very extensive religious doctrines; and as they had no written rules, or forms of worship, we have very little positive knowledge of those which they taught. Mela states that one of their tenets, which was revealed to the people, was the immortality of the soul and a future state of existence. Caesar states that they held the doctrine of transmigration, but there is reason to doubt whether this is correct, as Mela mentions that when the ashes of the dead were deposited in the ground, their books, documents of debt, &c. were laid beside them, as they were supposed they might be of use to the deceased in another world. This is certainly incompatible with the idea, that the soul after death passed into another body, and lived again on this earth. The sum of their moral doctrine consisted in doing good, worshipping the gods, and exercising fortitude. Respecting their gods, we can say almost as little as respecting their doctrines, but that they worshipped a great many is certain. Baal, Bel, or Esus, the omnipotent, was the supreme deity, and seems to have been represented by the sun. Jow, or Jupiter, presiding over a vast empire, was also an object of high reverence. Woden, the god of war, and Friga, his wife, were adored as the dictators of battles and administrators of pleasure, and may be looked upon as emblematical; for a victory was never gained without its accompanying consort, rapine and plunder. They are said to have dedicated the tenth of their captives, ascertained by lot, a sacrifice to this deity, who was formerly a valiant prince among the Saxons, afterwards deified. Our Wednesday is derived from him. The northern historians make him the father of Thor. The Danish warriors, when going to battle, made a vow to send him a certain number of souls, which he received in Valhalla, his ordinary place of residence. They conceived that the greatest happiness of the heroes who were translated into heaven, consisted in drinking ale out of the skulls of their enemies in his hall; and that admission was only to be obtained into this paradise by the most hardy deeds of bloodshed. "But this makes me always rejoice, that in the halls of our Father Odin there are seats prepared, where in a short time we shall be drinking ale out of the hollow skulls of our enemies. In the house of the mighty Odin no brave man laments death—I come not with the voice of despair to Odin's hall."—*Funeral Song of Toobrog, King of Denmark, who lived in the ninth Century.—Ossian.*

Mara was a frightful spectre, who delighted in terrifying people while asleep, sitting above them, and presenting to their imaginations the most frightful pictures, from whence is derived our word nightmare. The elf, or fairies, were also objects of supreme respect, as they were considered to be very malignant towards whoever spoke evil of them.

In the palace of Woden the souls of such heroes as fell in battle enjoyed supreme felicity. The day is spent in hunting and imaginary combats, and at night they feast on the most delicious viands served up by nymphs adorned with never-fading beauty and everlasting youth. Of the Flathinnis, or Isle of the Noble Ones, there is a description in a legend preserved by Macpherson, but it is too long for insertion. It is represented as a place where the mountains are covered with perpetual verdure—trees loaded with leaves, large valleys open to the sea—no rude wind walks the mountain—no storm courses through the sky—all is calm and bright! Autumn's sun shines for ever—he hastens not to the west for repose. In his meridian height he sits, and looks obliquely on the noble isle. On the rising hills are the halls of the departed—the high-roofed dwellings of the heroes of old. There, with the

valiant, are the companions of their loves, whose youth is increased by the change.

The Druidic hell is named Isfuri, or the Island of Cold; a region where no ray of the sun ever visits. There, serpents sting, lions and wolves devour, but the wretched never enjoy the privilege of dying. They are eternally tortured; and even here there are different degrees of punishment; the most criminal are confined in caverns filled with snakes, and the roofs constantly distilling poison.

ON VISITING A SCENE OF YOUTH IN THE VICINITY OF KILKENNY.

Delightful scene! with pleasure I review
Thy verdant meads, and lawns of emerald hue,
Where oft in childhood's sportive hours I stray'd
With dear companions, by yon bright cascade,
Sweet transient age! so free from care and strife,
Whose mildew blights the flowers of after life;
And thou art bright as in that cloudless day,
Though all of childhood else hath passed away.
Playmates are gone—some to a distant shore,
Beyond hope's promise ev'n of meeting more;
While others, friends beloved, once dear to sight,
With time have taken their last heavenward flight.
Yes, you alone, dear haunt of infancy,
Remain unchanged in beauty—still art free;
Thy mould'ring towers of by-gone days still tell
Where taste and science, real worth, did dwell—
The air seems hallow'd, sighing through the aisles,
And ivied casements of their Gothic piles.
The ample garden, with its turrets high,
And labour'd terrace, beauteous to the eye—
The crystal fountain 'neath th' embowering shade—
Are all memorials of that cloister'd grade,
Whose name o'er history's page a light has cast,
That Vandals could not with their structures blast.
Blest pow'r of mind! that thus can spread its rays,
When its frail moulding death's stern call obeys:
Dear emanation of the heavenly flame,
That can extend from age to age a gleam,
Inspiring youthful virtue, giving force
To its fond breathings in each hallowed course.
The rivulet that wends with noiseless way
Along these ruins its unchanging way,
Will leave its bed, and seek some brighter vale,
And odours cease to mingle with the gale,
Ere the famed names of those shall be forgot
Who raised this temple—formed this lovely spot.
The modern villa, with its gay parterre,
Of admiration also claims a share—
The mossy lawn, with daisies spangled o'er,
And the rich orchard with its fragrant store.
No heart so callous, but must glow, expand,
When nature sheds her treasures o'er the land.
The sylvan grove, inviting to its shade
The pensive lover and light hearted maid—
Cradle of music—from thy every spray
Is heard the dulcet-summer roundelay
Of aerial songsters, while the nestlings try
A mimic motion, ope their wings to fly.
The hills in beauty with the vale may cope—
There the proud larch and elm have ample scope
To spread their branches, and each tint compare
Of their new dress in morning's purple air.
The copsewood, too, the gen'ral bloom extends,
And to the air its meed of fragrance lends.
The heath and wild thyme burst upon the view
At ev'ry opening with their buds of blue.
The Nore, reflective, flows in pride along,
Mocking description in the poet's song;
While light canoe, and fairy skiff and cot,
Play on its bosom; and while flow'ry grot
And gay pavilion by its margin prove
Both art and nature form'd the scene to love,
Home of my childhood, of my sports and wiles,
Eg'n now thy charms of care my heart beguiles;
It glows enraptured, once more to review
Objects of pleasure mem'ry holds so true.

C. M. C.

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